

Shabby Deal For Cuba Invasion Planner Told

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BY DAVID SENTNER

Chief, Hearst Headline Service
Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON, Oct. 31. —

The shabby deal received by the late Ambassador Whiting Willauer in being removed as the top planner and air cover advocate of the ill-fated Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba was revealed today from released secret congressional committee testimony.

The poignant story of the summary ousting of Willauer which contributed to his death from a broken heart, according to his friends, was first disclosed by this correspondent a month ago.

THE FALLOUT of bureaucracy, Willauer's warning that Castro was playing the communist game and his expert blueprint for a successful invasion of Red Cuba had much to do with the creation of a grim Cuban crisis.

Willauer, former ambassador to Costa Rica and Honduras, and appointed Assistant Secretary of State by President Eisenhower on December 10, 1960, to brain- trust the Cuban invasion plan, testified before the Senate Intelligence Subcommittee on the executive session as

IF THE invasion effort had been commenced at least the month earlier with the help of the intelligence establishment, Castro had been made available to the President and higher echelons, the invasion would have had at least a 50 percent better chance than it had.

That in checking on original invasion plan run by the Cubans but by the CIA, he felt "one of the great weaknesses of plan was the lack of provision of top air cover for low level strafing missions of B-26 bombers which supposed to carry out beachhead."

"I felt that top level cover should come from jet fighters," Willauer added.

Then came in the new Kennedy administration and mission as "senior partner with the CIA" in developing the invasion was confirmed.

Willauer testified he felt that his ideas had reached a point where they had to be put on paper and to firm up what he thought should be done regarding the Cuban invasion.

HE ATTEMPTED to arrange an appointment with appropriate officials in the CIA but they all claimed to be out of town and his opposite number in the CIA, Tracy Barnes, said, "we can't talk to you any more. We can only talk to other people."

He presumably meant A. A. Berle Jr. and Chester Bowles, high state department officials.

Willauer testified he tried to get an appointment with Bowles.

"I tried for 30 days straight," Willauer continued. "I called his secretary every day, or went up to see her. I saw her in the hall. He said, 'I am awfully busy, I will see you later.'"

But he never did.

WILLAUER'S impressive record in the war and in public service was put in the testimony: Formation of General Chennault's Flying Tigers, organizing the air transport for UNRRA and ECA in the Far East, pioneering the hump air route from India to China, masterminding guerilla operations against the Japanese and the Chinese communists, licensed pilot with more than 3,000 hours in the air, commendation for risked life in rescue work while ambassador to Honduras, coordinator of Admiral Byrd's second Antarctic expedition, and a long listing of top government posts. Senator Dodd, D-Conn., subcommittee chairman told Willauer:

"When I say you were treated shabbily, I mean the welfare of the country was treated shabbily."